



Testimony for CO2 Budget Trading Program Regulation

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Mom's Clean Air Force

Hello, My name is Brooke Petry, and I'm the Southeastern Pennsylvania Field Organizer for Mom's Clean Air Force. I'm testifying today on behalf of Mom's Clean Air Force's Pennsylvania Chapter, and also on behalf of myself and my family. I am a resident of Philadelphia Pennsylvania, where I live with my partner and our 11 year old daughter. Thank you for the opportunity to give testimony during this hearing.

I am testifying today to voice my support for Pennsylvania to link to the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, swiftly and without delay. One of the commonwealth's largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions of carbon dioxide is the power sector – coal and natural gas power plants that generate electricity. Pennsylvania's power sector is the fifth dirtiest in the nation and there are currently no limits on the amount of carbon dioxide that power plants can spew into the air. Coal plants emit the most hazardous air pollution in the power sector, and Pennsylvania is home to six of them. They are a major contributor to the state's climate pollution.

Pennsylvania clearly has an enormous responsibility to lead the charge in reducing carbon pollution from our power sector to address the health hazards of air pollution and mitigate the impacts of climate change on our children's health and future.

My South Philadelphia community knows all too well the impacts that polluting industries can have on families, as we live only a few miles from the now shuttered Philadelphia Energy Solutions oil refinery that polluted our city for more than 100 years, and about a mile from a busy interstate. Our air quality is consistently poor, which for me and my family, is a source of constant concern. My 11 year old daughter and I both suffer from asthma, which is made worse by air pollution as well as extreme heat - another symptom of the climate crisis. On extremely hot days and days with poor air quality, I often question whether it's ok for my daughter to go outside even for a short walk with friends. The COVID-19 crisis has made us particularly concerned for our health, as we could suffer more severe impacts of the virus because of our asthma diagnosis and the poor quality of the air we breathe.

Here in Philadelphia, the childhood asthma rate is more than twice the national average, and more than 40% of kids - including my own - with asthma report missed school days due to asthma complications. Nationwide, complications from asthma account for more than 10 million lost school days each year and is the third leading cause of hospitalization among kids.

Even before the pandemic struck, I worked to balance my daughter's physical health with her emotional health - a balance that has come into laser focus as we continue to grapple with the COVID 19 pandemic, remote learning options, and lack of normal socialization due to quarantines and safety measures that keep us safe.

We know that Pennsylvanians across the state are demanding bold climate action - cutting pollution from the power sector through a program like RGGI is a step in the right direction. Inaction is already putting families, children, and other frontline communities at risk.

I can't control the air my child breathes so I depend on agencies like the DEP to enact the strongest policies possible to protect her health and future. I urge you to move quickly to link Pennsylvania to the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative to help ensure a healthy future for my daughter and all children across the commonwealth.